

Manita S. Dilley -- Pocahontas County -- Ch. 4 Section 4a - 5
History of Marlinton

In 1751 General Andrew Lewis and Captain John Stuart came to Marlins Bottom and found Jacob Marlin and Stephen Seivell living here without families. Marlin and Seivell were of the Daniel Boone type who did not bother to take title to the land upon which they lived. So Lewis had the first go at surveying the land at this place and claiming it as his own grant. This survey was respected and the settlers who came in settled up Price Run or Stony Creek. But it is on the Lewis survey that most of the town of Marlinton is built, on the oldest and best title in West Virginia. The stump of the old corner oak marked by Lewis is still standing. This is the oldest land mark east of the Mississippi River.

Be it known that under the Albany treaty of 1722, white people had no right to survey on the western waters--that is Mississippi drainage--in 1751.

However, Lewis and others had a plan to colonize the Greenbrier Valley under the name of the Greenbrier Company, and this company fooled the King and Council into believing the Greenbrier flowed into the James River. Under this pretense, a charter was given to take up for settlement a hundred thousand acres of land in the Greenbrier country.

Now the question naturally arises why did not Andrew Lewis go further and include in his survey the fine bottom lands of the Fair Ground and adjoining farms. It is believed that Jacob Marlin laid claim to that part of the bottom for his own. The only basis for this belief is that twenty-five years later Lawrence Drinnon had his fort on the present Fair Grounds and his wife was Sallie, a daughter of Jacob Marlin.

As soon as Lewis and others began to survey out land on the Greenbrier River, the Indians through the Long House of the Six Nations began to send word to London about the violation of the treaty of 1722. Orders of the King and Council did not keep the Scotch-Irish back; they merely left their surveying tools at home. We know that Jacob Warwick's mother, Elizabeth Dunlap Sitlington, was living at Marlinton in 1765. They wrote a letter back to the folk in Ireland. The letter was from Greenbrier. The king got suspicious of the description of the land that lay north and west of Cowpasture River. According to his views it should have been limited to the Allegheny Mountains for its western boundary.

In the meantime settlers who had come in here had stirred up trouble with the Indians and started the French and Indian War. After they had killed Braddock, the Indians

aided Marlins Bottom and killed and captured 18 persons. This was August 12, 1755. Lewis had been here in a kind of fort called Fort Greenbrier just before and after Braddock's defeat, but he had taken some Indian prisoners at this place and marched them to Fort Dinwiddle on the eastern side of the Allegheny.

Finally four years after Virginia had become an independent state and called herself the Commonwealth of Virginia, Lewis got his deed. Thomas Jefferson, Governor, reciting that Lewis had made composition with the commonwealth by the paying of two shillings, he was given a grant or deed for 480 acres of land at the mouth of Weings(knob) Creek by virtue of a survey made Oct. 11, 1751. This deed was given June 2, 1780. The Revolution had been about won by that time. The general's delay in proving up his land claims can easily be accounted for by the fact that he was busy with the affairs of the French and Indian War and he had been detained as a prisoner of war in Canada.

He came back from Canada in broken health in 1780, leaving a will by which he gave the 480 acres at Marlens Bottom to his son John Lewis. John Lewis died the next year leaving the land to four of his children, Charles, Samuel, Andrew and Eliza. They in turn sold it to Jacob Warwick and Warwick signed the title bond to William Poage Jr. as a marriage portion. Poage was a Major in the war of 1812. He was one of the charter members of the court that formed Pocahontas County, and was sheriff of the county. He died in 1827 leaving the land to two of his children, Woods Poage and Margaret Poage (Mrs. James A. Price).

The next move in title was that Woods Poage sold his half of the land to his brother-in-law James A. Price, this gave the Prices 2,211 acres in and around Marlins Bottom. Later James Price sold the Woods Poage farm to Dr. George B. Moffett, who in turn sold one half of it to Hugh McLaughlin. When the town site was proposed in 1891 as the last of the Virginia Boom towns, the title was in the names of the following persons: William H. McClintic, William J. McLaughlin, A. M. McLaughlin, Samuel D. Price, William T. Price, James H. Price and Levi Gay.

These were all farms. There were no commercial activities whatever. Huntersville was town. Buckeye and Edray were the nearest stores

From:--1928 Blue Book by Andrew Price

From:--Pocahontas Times--Dec. 24, 1936

In December of 1890 an epoch making snow fell, making it the winter of the big snow. While it lay on the ground to the depth of three feet or more, Colonel John T. McGraw of Grafton made a visit to this county and purchased the farms known as Marlins Bottom for a town site. The name of the postoffice had been changed in 1887 from Marlins Bottom to Marlinton. Mrs. Janie B. Skyles, a Maryland lady, was instrumental in bringing about the change. She objected to the word Bottom as not being a nice word. The old timers were horrified when they found the name had been changed, but the harm had been done and all appeal to congress failed to undo the harm. Mr. Skyles soon afterwards moved away but she left us christened with a new name.

The purchase of the town site by Colonel McGraw was the first intimation that the people had of the proposed railway developments. The plan was that the Camden System of railroads was to extend up Williams River, across the divide at the head of Stony Creek and to Marlinton. It was a part of the plan that the Chesapeake and Ohio would build an extension from Hot Springs to Marlinton to connect with the Camden. The railroad was not built at that time because of a money panic which came to the county. Colonel McGraw, who had invested largely in lands elsewhere in the county, never ceased to try to interest capitalists in this county and develop it with a railroad. His attention was called to the natural route for a railroad up Greenbrier River. He had a survey made from Marlinton to Ronceverte at a cost of \$10,000, and it was on this location that the railroad was afterwards begun in 1899 and finished in 1901.

The town of Marlinton was laid off in town lots in 1891, and widely advertised as a place where a town could be built. The Pocahontas Development Company was chartered and took a deed for 640 acres on which the town was to be built. They put valuable improvement on it. An offer of \$5,000 to be applied on a new courthouse was made, if the people of the county would change the county seat from Huntersville to Marlinton. The election held in the fall of 1891 gave the county seat to Marlinton. At that time Marlinton had a population of about 100 people.

Marlinton began to improve as soon as the railroad was completed. It was incorporated at the April Term of Court, 1900, and held its first election on May 5, 1900.

JACKSON COUNTY
THE HISTORY OF HILLSBORO COMMUNITY

(By Mary Isetta Wallace)

The town of Hillsboro is located in a rich and beautiful valley. It is two and one-half miles from the nearest railroad station called Seebert and named in honor of a family by the name which settled there in the wilderness in the early days. Hillsboro was named for Richard Hill, the pioneer from North Carolina who built his home on a good farm in the neighborhood of Lobelia. His house was an unusually good one for that age. Simon Girty, the renegade, told that the Indians were so impressed with the fine display of the home of Mr. Hill that they called him the White's Man King.

The house was built of hewed logs, and the space between was filled with wood and mortar or mud, and then whitewashed. It had three porches, two tall chimneys and eight rooms. Hills Creek was named for Mr. Hill, and, because of his sterling worth, "will sing his requiem as long as its waters flow". The creek flows through a narrow channel which increases its velocity until it plunges over a precipice more than sixty feet high, forming a perfect spray and creating the beautiful Falls of Hills Creek.

Bruffeys Creek, named after the first settler, John Bruffey the pioneer, Revolutionary soldier under General Wayne, unites in time of flood with Hills Creek where their waters sink under Droop mountain to appear again in the lower end of the Little Levels. Hills Creek forms Locust creek and empties into the Greenbrier River. Bruffeys Creek forms Hughes creek, and after sinking and partly sinking for two miles, empties into the Blue Hole. Many of the numerous progeny of Richard Hill trace their homes in the Hillsboro community.

The majority of the people of Hillsboro Community are of Scotch Irish descent, their chief pursuits being agriculture and stock raising. Many fine herds of cattle and sheep, from time immemorial, have been prepared for the eastern markets, and at the present time under the stimulus of our county agent, Mr. H.C. C. Willey, the farmers are becoming more and more aroused as to the importance of purebred stock.

As the traveler ascends by an easy climb and gentle undulations the winding road out on the face of Droop Mountain he beholds a panorama of unsurpassed loveliness when the sun pours his effulgent warmth and brightness over mountains, plains, valleys and hills as they unite in proclaiming "The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice." He also beholds historic ground, for it was at the foot of Droop Mountain where General Averill with 5000 men pitched their tents before the battle of Droop Mountain which began on November 6, 1863.

Hillsboro has always been a religious and educational center. John Jordan of Pioneer fame, gave a building site to the Methodist church, which was destroyed by fire. They have since built four other churches in the community and now worship in a very comfortable, commodious building in the town of Hillsboro. In extracts from the journal of Rev. Francis Asbury, we find that in the years 1788, 1790 and 1796 he made three evangelistic tours through this section of the country, coming through Greenbrier County, each time and being entertained and preaching at the home of McNeel in the Little Levels, going from there to the Drinnen home where he was received so "gladly" and entertained so "kindly" in the Edray neighborhood. His course led from there to Cloverlick, down through Tygarts Valley in Randolph County enroute to Morgantown. At the McNeel home lively religious discussions were indulged in by the whole community.

Oak Grove Presbyterian Church was organized in the year 1793. The early records of the Church were lost and no one remembers when it was built. A substantial brick structure in which this sect worshiped for many years was later built south east of Hillsboro, where the cemetery is still kept up. In 1830 the church was re-organized and Josiah Beard, Davis Poague, and John Jordan were elected elders. The most distinguished ministers who served this Church from 1820 to 1872 were Rev. Joseph Brown, Rev. Wm. S. Campbell, Rev. John S. Blain, Rev. Mitchell S. Dunlap and Rev. D. S. Sydenstricker.

In the early part of the eighteenth century a very important educational work flourished in what was then the Village of Hillsboro. Under the supervision of Rev.

From the brick Academy was built and contained one large-central room with
The name of Hillsboro was abandoned in deference to that of "Academy" so
was the impression of the schools' influence on the minds and hearts of the
In recent years the old name of Hillsboro has been restored to the town.
A. Dunlap, of Ponca City, Oklahoma, has contributed some recollections of
the better days from his remarkable memory of conversations heard in the home of his
father, Rev. H. A. Dunlap. He thinks the first teacher ever in Hillsboro community
was a man by the name of Keenan who taught more than a hundred years ago. This teacher
was considered a very learned man from the fact that he could read and write and had
figured in the arithmetic as far as the rule of three.

The next teacher was Rev. John S. Blain, a Presbyterian preacher, a teacher,
and a physician. He is described as a large, lean, strong man, possessed of a kindly
and gentle heart. The description is somewhat contradictory as he is said to
have whipped 13 boys the second day of school, 21 the third day, and five or six
each day for about a week. After that no further trouble was experienced. But the
school had an unsavory reputation that had to be disciplined and he used the means
within his power. The wife of Dr. Blain was a Miss MacRoberts, sister of Archibald
MacRoberts, who made his home with them, told that panthers would sometimes enter
their spring house and drink their milk. Mrs. MacRoberts, whose father was Randolph,
of Kansas, and a descendent of Pocahontas, was the next teacher. He was well educated
and a man of great talents that he used only under compulsion. He was a Whig, and
in a campaign then being conducted between a Whig and a Democrat, in which the Whig
was defeated in the argument, Mr. MacRoberts became so disgusted that he followed
them to the next appointment and so completely routed the Democrat that he made it
difficult to steer clear of his antagonist.

The next teacher was Rev. Joseph Brown, whose gentle Christian character
was known to the people; and it is to be taken for granted that as he was instrumental
in the building of the brick Academy, he must have been the first teacher within its
walls. Rev. J. D. Dunlap succeeded him and taught from 1858 to 1868. His school had a
good reputation and his pupils enjoyed the patronage of the Lewises and

of Kanawha county; Tyrees and others of Fayette county; the Haynes and others of Boone county; the Johnsons, Bears, and others of Greenbrier county; the Johnsons, Lightners, and Ruchmans, of Highland county, Virginia, and the Lewises and others of Bath county, Virginia. He taught throughout the entire year and sought the help of the more advanced pupils, notably, Rev. Wm. P. Price and Rev. James Haynes. It was his opinion that about eighty pupils were as many as one man could handle.

Miss Mary Sprinkel taught in the home of Colonel McNeel, the first year of the Civil War, and was betrothed to John Burgess, the first man from this community to be killed by the Northern soldiers in their initial raid through the country.

From the foregoing interesting data it is easy to understand why so many noble and worthy lives were molded in this fine institution of learning. The lives of Mr. Hermanus Stulting and family deserve special mention. They were natives of Holland, and to escape religious persecution, braved the perils of the deep on the rude craft of that day and came to dwell among us when the country was in its infancy. They were valuable additions to the social life of the community and through their devoted piety accomplished much good in this land of their adoption. Mr. Cornelius Stulting, eldest son in the family, was a fine teacher for many years and died recently, mourned by all who knew him. Mrs. Carrie Stulting Sydenstricker, a daughter in the family, gave her life as a missionary to China, being sent as a member of Oak Grove Church.

Pioneers. The first permanent settler in the wilderness of the Hillsboro community was John McNeel, of Frederick County, Virginia. He was of a pugilistic temperament and in the fear that he had slain his antagonist, fled from his native land and became a fugitive who followed the trend of the Alleghenies. After spending sometime in their gloomy depths he emerged into this section of the country and was so favorably impressed with the fertile land, fine timber and the general outlook of a goodly place to dwell, that he cast his tent on the gentle slope between where are now the gate at the road and the latter John McNeel residence. He came here in the year 1765. After he began to occupy his tent steps were heard circling the camp

night. He feigned sleep, keeping his gun near at hand, until he heard something creep upon the poles forming the roof. When he looked in the direction of the sound he beheld, by the light of the camp fire, the fiery eyes of a panther. He lost no time in getting rid of the unwelcome visitor.

On day while out hunting for venison and fish he met Charles and Jacob Kennison, natives of his home land, who proved angels in disguise in bringing to him the glad tidings that the man he thought he had killed had recovered and was in good health. Imagination fails to convey the great relief and gratitude that filled his heart to know he was not a murderer, of which his future life gave convincing evidence. He invited the Kennisons to share his camp and aided them in selecting a home site adjoining his tract. About this time John McNeel must have built himself a cabin in the rear of the Matthew John McNeel residence, near a wonderful spring in that locality. These three men soon returned to the lower valley of Virginia. It was on this visit that he married Martha Davis who was born in Wales in 1840. Soon after their marriage they came to the Little Levels to make their home. They brought with them a Welch Bible now in the possession of Joseph S. McNeel, son of Captain William Lamb McNeel.

Joseph McNeel is the man who offered, free of charge, marble or granite to build our new State Capitol. This stone exists in great abundance within our beautiful hills that encompass our mountains and that shelter our valley on the West. It has been a source of great disappointment to many to have such a generous offer rejected and one that if it had been accepted would have filled the heart of every citizen with a just and civic pride.

John McNeel was so deeply impressed with a sense of God's providential care that, in gratitude of him, he built the White Hole Church on the hill set apart for the McNeel cemetery, the first church in the community. These three men joined the expedition to Point Pleasant in October 10, 1774. They were spared to return home, for a short time, as they enlisted in a company formed in Frederick County, Virginia, during the Revolution. After that experience they returned to the Country and pursued "the even tenor of their lives".

folk tradition informs us that while John McKeel was at Point Pleasant he was born and died before his return, and that the mother, with her own hands, made the coffin, dug the grave and buried the child. This was the first grave in the McKeel cemetery, near the White Pole Church, which spot affords such charming landscape views of the surrounding country.

And now we come to the northern section of the Hillsboro community which is Mill Point, a charming little industrial village including within its proper limits a store, a blacksmith shop, two flour mills and three homes. Many more homes are close by built on the hills and nestling in the coves and glens. Tourists exclaim over the majestic sweep of the hills and their graceful contour as they converge toward the village enclosing a scene of entrancing beauty.

Just above the village a beautiful and picturesque spring is found tucked away in a sheltered nook among the lovely foothills that dip their feet into the laughing waters of Stamping Creek, informing each other that the whites were aroused and that they must flee.

The people who live in this community are the McKeels, Beards, Clarks, Morrisons, Cledensins, Bruffeys, Hills, Moores, Clutters, Auldridges, Harpers, Kennisons, Wades, Lewises, McCertys, McCoys, Smiths, Cockleys, Ruckmans, McLaughlins and others.

(In the preparation of this article the writer is greatly indebted to Dr. Wm. T. Price's History of Pocahontas County, West Virginia, Border Warfare, as well as to friends and neighbors).

From - Pocahontas Times

July 4, 1924.

Mrs. Rella F. Yeager

Rella F. Yeager

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GREEN BANK DISTRICT - *Fayette County*

Green Bank District is the most northern district in ~~the~~ ^{Fayette} county. It is bounded on the north and north-west by Randolph County, on the east by Pendleton and Highland counties, south by Huntersville and Edray Districts. The surface is broken and mountainous. The fountain streams of the Greenbrier river constitute the drainage system. Among these are the east and west branches of the Greenbrier river, Little River, Deer Creek, North fork of Deer Creek and Leatherbark Creek.

The old mill which has been mentioned with the machine in connection with the making of tools and implements of iron and steel. This machine was used in drawing out and flanning large iron and steel for making wagon tires, horse shoes, shovel plows, bolts, nails and shaping out heavy iron work. The site of the old Mill and Tilt Hammer is on the land of Henry Wooddell, near Greenbank, in Greenbank District. The pit and embankments may be seen on the west side of the road between Martin Sutton's Blacksmith shop and Henry Wooddell's house. The old Mill race is now used for the county road. This mill was a great labor saving for the community and had its niche in the early development of the community.

Harman Conrad of Frederick County, Maryland, purchased the William Taylor Grant from John Brown, on August 3rd, 1799, and began to harness the water power of North Fork, which was called Cartmills Creek at that time. He built a Tub Mill or corn mill which was kept in running condition for ten or fifteen

years. His son, Solomon Conrad, who was a veteran of the war of 1812, after going through the war and being honorably discharged took charge of the home place and rebuilt the mill, which was made to grind buckwheat and wheat. About 1840, he built and operated an up and down saw mill, until the close of the Civil War. This mill, known as the Conrad Mill, was considered first class, making the very best corn meal, buckwheat and wheat flour. In connection with the saw mill he had a dry kiln, and always had some of the very best white pine lumber to sell. In that day and time no log was sawed into lumber unless it was the very best.

The old mill site and the Solomon Conrad homestead has been the home of O. L. Orndorff, a grandson, who, in 1893, had to re-roof and weatherboard the old home, and ^{employ} Warwick Hudson and Newton Ervin to rebuild the chimneys. This is the oldest house in the Greenbank community, having stood 115 years or more, is on the colonial style, with its massive chimneys, and old time fire places and spacious mantels ~~is~~ in a fine state of preservation and has the appearance of standing another century.

In the year 1822, Patrick Bruffey purchased from Jacob Gillispie and James Tallman, 134 acres of land, which was part of the Thomas Jarvis Grant of 400 acres. He built a grist mill and saw mill and carved a mill race out of the hill side more than a quarter of a mile. This same mill race has been in constant use for a period of 112 years and is still running. In connection with the saw mill, he established a wagon shop,

blacksmith shop, and supplied the neighborhood with wagons. The late William Sutton of the hill neighborhood, learned the wagon makers trade under Patrick Bruffey and carried on the work long after the Civil War. Patrick Bruffey was Magistrate in the community for several years and became Sheriff of Pocahontas County later.

The pioneer, Daniel Kerr, who, soon after the Revolutionary War, located on Deer Creek, now below the town of Boyer, established a grist mill, saw mill, blacksmith shop and managed a store and his place became one of industry for that part of the community. A lathe was installed at this place and was operated by Frederick Phillips, who was a wheelright, and made spinning wheels, looms, reels, spools, spool frames, and chairs. The site of this old mill may be seen on the north side of the creek near the east end of the Hevener farm.

The pioneer Luday Taylor, who was a veteran of the war of 1812, purchased land from Solomon Townsend and others in 1819, and settled on Galford's Creek. He erected a grist mill and a saw mill. This mill was kept in running condition until about 1880, and had its niche in the early advancement and development of that part of Greenbank community. The old Luday Taylor homestead is now owned by Arch Galford.

Thus is noted some of the early developments of Greenbank District, Pocahontas County, which District now leads the County in industrial development.

Rebecca H. Georges

(Above information gotten from local sources)